

Notice of Public Meeting of a Public Body

Sections 7.6, 7.7.4 and 7.9.1

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING OF THE

Governor's Forest Health ADVISORY COUNCIL

Pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431, notice is hereby given to the members of the Forest Health Advisory Council and to the general public that the **Forest Health Advisory Council** will hold a meeting open to the public:

Tuesday, November 9th, 2004 - 1:30 p.m.
Arizona State Lands Department
1616 West Adams – Room #321 (3rd Floor)
Phoenix, AZ 85007

1) Call to order – 1:42

2) Review and vote on minutes from the **10.14.04** meeting

Motion to approve, seconded. No discussion.

3) Subcommittees

a. Reports

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| i. Land Use & Wildland Fire - | Don Falk |
| ii. Mapping & Assessment - | Kathy Hemenway |
| iii. Monitoring & Evaluation - | Ed Smith |
| iv. Policy - | Lori Faeth |

i. Land Use

Don Falk – Now have full draft, going through review, impressed with depth and comprehensiveness of report.

Behavior, looked at interactions between fire and the built environment where conflicts have become extreme, offered tools that would allow state and communities to move forward. Attention paid to question elsewhere in the country – many relevant models for zoning, etc. from other communities. Also have section dealing with interface between public and private land and the ways private land influences the management of public land. Landscape view of issue is helpful and should give us tools. Two bibliographies: one technical on fire, the other on land use and planning and regulatory tools. Thanks subcommittee. Anticipates having document for discussion at next full advisory council meeting. Would like to discuss form in which it might be published and disseminated.

ii. Mapping & Assessment

Marty – Kathy Hemenway has requested to resign from project, from co-chair of subcommittee. Will be talking with Kirk and others about where we go from here. Kathy has done a lot of work; we can capture what she has done, confident. Recommends having sit down meeting to talk about a replacement.

Kirk – There is a distinction between Mapping & Assessment and AZ Fire Map Project; Kathy was engaged in both and sometimes the distinction was not clear. Management Executive Review Board for people like Kathy, etc. to field policy and financial questions. Kathy's duties related to AZ Fire Map field to Board. Gene volunteered to pull together an assessment of what Kathy had accomplished, and unfinished business might be contracted out. For AZ Fire Map, looks like her absence will be okay; have structure. For subcommittee, may toss it over to Baron on how to patch.

Baron – Agree with Kirk that AZ Fire Map is very distinct from this subcommittee. Technical point of view – there are no guidelines for what happens if a chair leaves. Would like to proceed with the advice of the Council, not just the subcommittee. Would like to continue as co-chair. We would need someone with

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better access to Phoenix for another co-chair.

Marty – Agrees with Baron. Suggests the subcommittee should get together and make recommendation for chair. Next meeting, announce a replacement.

Baron – Would like recommendations. Would like to make sure that subcommittee remains in sync with council.

Ed Smith question – interested in taking on single chair, Baron? – Thinks there may be a person who is more engaged; does not believe that he can give it the same attention. Suggests someone more tied to Phoenix.

Beth – list of members? On website. There is a broader list on email that Baron can send along.

Ed Smith – data? Kathy is very willing to share work, the biggest chunk of which has been on parameters. Glenn and Gene's group has pursued the actual spatial data. Believes there is a good chance we can move forward and create this prototype database for AZ Fire Map. Is more concerned with keeping Kathy's connections and momentum. AZ Fire Map is a one-year deal looking to expand; Kathy was ahead on seeking out funding, need that back.

Marty estimates Kathy spent about 20-30 hours per week on the subcommittee. Kirk offers that she might be a rare find.

Taylor raises the issue of funding. Immediate concern that absent an independent funding source, filling the position is difficult. Opportunities for cost-share.

Baron – transition strategy: AZ Fire Map will dictate whether or not somebody wants to contribute. Recommended that Kathy not report on a regular basis, let the project grow into a level that you can demonstrate with competence. Let the project take on other questions.

Gene – concern – agrees that AZ Fire Map is spinoff of subcommittee, however since Kathy provided a lot of the input, wouldn't like to see a total divorce of two (Map and subcommittee) – may be that committee should work together to continue outreach to communities doing the work, making contributions to Map.

Kirk – summarizes. Throw back to subcommittee to determine how to accommodate Kathy's absence. Bring proposal back to council for January. If there are financial implications, bring back to table as well. Agreement from council.

Ed Smith – what the specific objectives of the subcommittee complementary/different vs. Fire Map – not clear. Kirk agrees.

Baron – Subcommittee does a lot, serves function of representing the people we need to ask the questions of to get a good product (a user spec); committee has faced issues, we have not been asked to come up with a stance on various issues – may need to add that duty

Taylor – characterize 1) what is purpose, 2) question of Fire Map Project, needs assessment, especially for a new co-chair

Baron – agrees. Will make every effort to be somewhere before the January meeting.

Update on AZ Fire Map

Baron – Biggest breakthrough is coming up with variables/attributes in nifpor's database, turning into English (there are five separate date fields, not a simple database), going through number of other data fields, coming up with commonality, structuring in an organized way, teasing out from programming point of view and cohesiveness. We are pretty close. "Scope creep" is a major concern for this project. Originally it was a fuels treatment initiative; we should concentrate on that and not get excited about the other things possible until we get that done. Server has been purchased. Might start getting paid soon. Doing reasonable compared to projected schedule we internally agreed upon. Asks that the council be conservative in approach.

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- Gene – Asks that everyone remember this is phase one of the Map. Goal is fuels treatments; other stuff will be in there as context, but not the focus.
- Baron – Potential recommendations about protocols, how to collect, label data, requirement of anything specific when we give funds for these activities for more standardized data. By the time database is constructed, have good recommendations.
- Kirk – Next round of grant agreements mid-January – to the extent that we want to require reports back with standard data, that is our best shot. We can definitely ask if we know what it is we want them to report.
- Baron – Reports that Walter (?) is live. You can weigh parameters. 1) Points to things we can do down the road. Computations on the fly, pixel by pixel. Major breakthrough to take advantage of. 2) Consensus-building tool. Walter.Arizona.edu
- Gene – State statute that does not let us share data without considering commercial value of the data. 1) For making data available to public, have been working with AG office. Putting up portal of downloadable data. Mechanism for due diligence – viewing is okay, to download, there will be a pop-up to verify they are not a commercial user. Will then require password and log in. Should open the door to get a lot of things on website. 2) Starting a series of MOUs with local organizations who don't want to share the data. Have the mechanism going in place – propose that Fire Map test with this, figure out compliance.
- Taylor – Suggests that in January we pass a resolution in appreciation of Kathy's work.

iii. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Ed – Major stumbling block is the lack of good information about the condition of our forests right now. Need a good inventory of the state of the forests as part of charge as subcommittee and council. Identified some avenues to get information, since then asked to prepare ecological models throughout AZ and NM – products will not be available for another 18 months. Research branch of G&F has looked to gather sense of impacts on wildlife species. Bring back to Council – what else can we do to inform policy and action at state and federal level, to have better sense of where we are with forests and where we're going. Efforts ongoing, but do not have answer yet; will take sizable amount of funding to do good job.
- Don – Question: Are you viewing this as question-driven monitoring, or general keeping tabs on forest? Latter is difficult to do in any meaningful way. Are you thinking of this as intended to address particular questions?
- Ed – Looking at having an understanding of the state of the forests beyond standard exams, forest plan compliance. More of a conditioned report on the forests from a broad standpoint—soil, microbes, mammals, birds, etc., watersheds. Don – mostly community and ecosystem attributes, less individual species. Yes, but not ruling out individual species. At least have coarse filter look at forests to have for the future some knowledge of the impacts of treatment. Question driven in the best case, otherwise there is no monitoring. Recognizing that any small effort is a step in the right direction. Don – Goes to the vagueness of the term “forest health” – have to track everything. A monitoring strategy would be to focus on high-risk, but then you miss all the other complexities. Don't understand completely how it will inform the work of the council. Fine line between too-narrow and too-broad. Ed – Charge of committee is assessment of fields reduction, evaluate which treatments the council should recommend moving forward with. Interpretation can be narrow or broad. Not a purely field-based exercise, primarily literature-based. Model development based on what's quantitative, anecdotal, etc.
- Taylor – Game & Fish giving a presentation about modeling; suggests figuring out a time for that presentation. Looks most like February, put preliminarily on the agenda.

iv. Policy

Lori not in attendance.

Beth updates on Oversight meeting. Policy committee is meeting December 9th in State Land room 329, 9:30.

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They have asked for a joint meeting for a strategic plan in January. Diane will solicit input via email. Marketing our guiding principles also came up. Ed/Marty suggest incorporating principles into wildfire protection plans. Kirk says that in general the communities are trying to get plans done quickly, so many are already done or well in progress—might find ourselves too late. Don't have the mechanism to do anything but offer that they might want to consider. Might be better to just ask the communities to embrace the principles and use them as guidelines. Taylor thinks we should take it up in January at the joint meeting, that it falls more under the purview of the Oversight Council.

4) Fire Management Planning & Wildland Fire Use Planning

a. Tom Zimmerman, USFS Region 3, from New Mexico.

PowerPoint presentation – 2001 policy review/update should be online by next spring, will be implemented, strengthening and clarifying the 1995 policy. Science component is brand new.

Taylor asks if there are standard criteria to determine wildland fire use areas? No. They use a decision criteria checklist – if any question is answered positively, the land is out. Identified threats to life and property, community values, escape routes, and then lump together for protection capability. What's left are areas that are candidates for wildland fire use. The areas in AZ and NM are quite a bit more than wilderness. Was a risky and complex program – deals with long duration fires that will go on for however long and require management. We like to look at everything as a candidate and then take out areas.

Taylor asks if the MMA Definition is determined on a case-by-case basis? Might be pre-identified before fire starts, but yes. Has there been thought given to breaking up establishing long-term containment zones? Yes. Would like to see all the areas pre-identified, run in winter-time before the fire starts. Would pre-identification happen at the forest level? Could be done in a FM Plan, in an appendix, or see if MMA from previous years apply.

Kirk asks what accommodations the policy has for reconsidering MMAs weeks into fires? Old policy has no provision. The Parks Service has provision that once you do a stage 3, you have to revisit at least every 30 days, and if situation changes, you can make modifications. New directions coming out next spring will give flexibility, will be able to do modifications.

Kirk asks about average costs? \$3.50 - \$700/acre. Cost far less than suppression, but discourages the comparison, because we are implementing the appropriate response to each situation. They are both part of the program. The average cost runs about \$50-70/acre. Aviation costs constitute about 30%.

Taylor asks for an example of a real-world case where MMAs were pre-defined and are being used for fire management for the long-term? Don't know of any pre-determined examples, but there are many that MMAs from previous years are being reused.

Taylor asks if there are any cases wherein fire restoration projects have been successful in using pre-determined MMAs? Eagle Cap in Oregon was one of first to apply fire in wilderness regions. We have variations amongst regions in Forest Services.

5) Demonstration Project

a. Kirk Rowdabaugh

Kirk says we can defer some to the next meeting. New responsibilities for State Forester added the demonstration project, but no mechanism for the SF to do so. Would like to turn to councils/partners in other agencies to obtain resources to do what statute calls for. Would like to present to advisory council to begin brainstorming how to meet requirement with resources available. Would like to plant that seed today, pick up conversation at the next meeting.

Taylor suggests that Kirk, Lori, and Taylor bring heads together on this for next meeting. Ed as well.

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6) Drought, Global Warning & Forests Whitepaper

a. Taylor McKinnon

Table and take up over internet? Start assigning tasks? Had two responses, but was no overly-aggressive. No objections.

Brian does not believe it will take very long to outline the big questions. He can generate quite a few comments that might be useful, would require discussion at the next meeting.

Taylor says the next step is to nail down the outline and then assign responsibilities. People can send him comments.

Carl says we should think about how to focus on the key areas when looking at the outline, not to be quite so all-encompassing.

7) Future meeting dates and locations

a. Winter 2004 Schedule

i. December 9th – Canceled

ii. January 13th – Phoenix, will be joint with other council; 9:30, location unknown – be looking for email on location, regarding the outline, and regarding the restoration strategy – please provide feedback

iii. February 10th – Phoenix

8) Call to the Public

9) Adjournment – 4:05

Dated this 9th day of November 2004 - Governor's Forest Health Councils

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